

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 19-49 are pending in this application. By this amendment, Claims 19-22, 30-33, and 40-42 are amended; no claims are canceled or added herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representatives during the July 6, 2006 personal interview. Applicants' statement of substance of the personal interview is incorporated into the above amendments and following discussion.

In the outstanding Office Action, the drawings are objected to; Claims 19-22, 24, 30-32, 34, 40-42 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Rydelek; and Claims 23, 33 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Rydelek in view of Takano.

With respect to the objection to the Drawings, the Office Action asserts that character "57" designates both an applicator and an opening in Fig. 2. However, there is no reference character in Fig. 2. Applicant's respectfully request clarification of the objection to the Drawings.

As discussed during the personal interview, the applied art does not teach or suggest a plurality of toner feeding devices and a plurality of imaging units detachably engaged to each other and each of the toner feeding devices including a toner feeding pipe that is configured to extend into a corresponding housing of the imaging unit and supply toner to the imaging unit, as recited in Claim 19 and similarly recited in independent Claims 30 and 40.

Instead, Rydelek merely discloses developing units 15-18 which include sumps 25-28. Replenishers 63 are positioned to be directly over extended portions 59 when the sumps are in their operative position. Replenishers 63 are driven by motors to meter toner under the

force of gravity down into augers 53 in the extended portion 59. Toner is received in the replenisher 63 from toner bottles 110-113.

Accordingly, the applied art does not teach or suggest the features discussed above with respect to the independent claims. The features of the independent claims provide an advantage of having a toner feeding device which enables the image forming apparatus to be compact and also reduces toner from leaking during toner supplying. The applied art does not teach or suggest the features of the independent claims and therefore, cannot provide at least the advantages discussed above.

Consequently, for at least these reasons, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the above listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



James J. Kulbaski
Registration No. 34,648

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 03/06)

JJK/KMM/law

I:\ATTY\KMM\PROSECUTION WORK\242388\242388US-AM.DOC

Surinder Sachar
Registration No. 34,423
Kevin M. McKinley
Registration No. 43,794